<u>**News Release**</u>
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GROUND-BREAKING RESEARCH ON LEAD POISONING AMONG YOUNG CHILDREN IN MONROE COUNTY WINS NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Rochester, N.Y. – Rochester-based CGR (Center for Governmental Research) was presented with the 2002 Most Distinguished Research award from the Governmental Research Association (GRA) for its report "Lead Poisoning Among Young Children in Monroe County: A Needs Assessment, Projection Model, and Next Steps." The study was funded by the Monroe County Health Department, with underwriting from HSBC Bank, as the County and other local stakeholders struggle to determine the most cost-effective approach to battling the "silent monster" of lead poisoning.

Sarah Boyce, M.S.P.H. directed the research under CGR's new practice area: Health and Social Policy. "Childhood lead poisoning is both an important health and housing policy issue. A collaborative effort by all stakeholders, public and private, is necessary to reduce and eventually eliminate this preventable illness," Ms. Boyce commented. Cross-cutting policy issues and challenges of this nature are what CGR will tackle under this new research umbrella, to help government and nonprofit officials better respond to public policy challenges.

The County of Monroe and other local stakeholders including the City of Rochester, landlords, housing agencies, and individual advocates are searching ways to target resources to protect the most children possible, in the shortest period of time. CGR was asked to (1) use Monroe County Health Department data on lead screenings to identify Census tracts with the highest rates of lead poisoned children, (2) project the number of children expected to test high for blood lead levels over the next 10 years, and (3) identify "next steps" for the myriad community stakeholders. The use of computerized mapping to illustrate the location of lead-poisoned children will provide policy makers with a unique ability to target resources in neighborhoods with the highest levels of need. The

projection model illustrates that targeting efforts will result in a faster reduction in the number of lead poisoned children over time.

GRA is the national organization of individuals professionally engaged in governmental research. Each year the Association holds an awards competition to recognize exceptional research and educational efforts regarding state and local governmental issues. The most distinguished research category is based on the challenge of the subject matter, the degree to which the study was grounded-breaking, and how well the basic purpose of the report is carried out.

Founded in 1915, CGR serves the public interest through nonpartisan research and management consulting. By developing objective perspectives on issues facing communities, CGR serves as a unique professional resource, empowering government, business, and nonprofit leaders to make informed decisions. CGR assists policy makers in improving the quality of their communities as places to live and do business. CGR delivers practical recommendations that lead to significant public policy action and organizational change.

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